

To: lynnda_kahn@fws.gov[]
Cc: []
Bcc: []
From: CN=Phil North/OU=R10/O=USEPA/C=US
Sent: Mon 9/12/2011 10:31:52 PM
Subject: Re: From E&ENews PM -- MINING: Sen. Cantwell urges EPA to consider fishery impacts of Alaska project
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Thanks Lynnda.

Phillip North
Environmental Protection Agency
Kenai River Center
514 Funny River Road
Soldotna, Alaska 99669
(907) 714-2483
fax 260-5992
north.phil@epa.gov

"To protect your rivers, protect your mountains."

From: lynnda_kahn@fws.gov
To: Phil North/R10/USEPA/US@EPA, phil_brna@fws.gov, douglas_palmer@fws.gov, frances_mann@fws.gov
Date: 09/12/2011 01:48 PM
Subject: From E&ENews PM -- MINING: Sen. Cantwell urges EPA to consider fishery impacts of Alaska project

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MINING: Sen. Cantwell urges EPA to consider fishery impacts of Alaska project (Monday, September 12, 2011)
Manuel Quinones, E&E reporter
Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) is promising to oppose a controversial mining project proposed for southwest Alaska if scientists predict the gold and copper mine will harm a thriving Bristol Bay salmon fishery.
In a letter sent today to U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, Cantwell said she would support an EPA veto of the Pebble mine to protect the environment and fish-related economy of the Bristol Bay watershed. EPA is conducting a review of large-scale development in the Bristol Bay watershed.
"In addition to the many scientific questions which will be addressed by EPA's analysis, I also ask you to please keep in mind that the salmonid populations in Bristol Bay are economic lynchpins for commercial

fishermen, not just of Alaska but also of my home state of Washington," Cantwell wrote Jackson. "Thousands of my constituents have contacted me expressing their concerns regarding the potentially catastrophic and widespread long-term impacts of the proposed Pebble Mine, which would be the world's largest man-made excavation."

Cantwell says thousands of people in her state depend on salmon-related jobs, including the restaurant and food-processing industries. She says almost all major companies that process Bristol Bay catches are based in her state.

The Pebble Limited Partnership -- London-based Anglo American PLC and Vancouver, British Columbia-based Northern Dynasty Minerals Ltd. -- is spending almost \$100 million this year on exploration and environmental studies on the site. However, the company has yet to submit any permit documents.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), in anticipation of Cantwell's letter, released a statement expressing support for a healthy fishing industry and for a clean Bristol Bay. She urged foes of the mining project to let the process for vetting development projects continue.

"Attempts to prejudge development in the Bristol Bay area before a permit application has even been submitted would make a mockery out of the federal environmental review process," Murkowski said. "A preemptive veto makes no more sense than a preemptive approval."

Murkowski also sent a letter to Jackson earlier this year expressing concerns about EPA's study of the Bristol Bay watershed.

"My concerns about the 'watershed assessment' in Bristol Bay are magnified by your agency's recent, retroactive veto of an already-approved permit in West Virginia," Murkowski wrote, referring to Arch Coal Co.'s Spruce No. 1 mine.

Several lawmakers from both parties -- including Alaska Republican Rep. Don Young and West Virginia Democratic Rep. Nick Rahall -- have been pushing for measures to stop or curtail EPA's ability to veto projects under the agency's Clean Water Act authority.

Earlier this year, Pebble opponents made the rounds in Washington to lobby against such moves (Greenwire, July 21).

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E&E Publishing, LLC
122 C St., Ste. 722, NW, Wash., D.C. 20001.
Phone: 202-628-6500. Fax: 202-737-5299.
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